

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of bidding to drive competition in an auction comprising:
 - receiving a plurality of bids from a plurality of bidders;
 - distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter;
 - assigning at least one identifier to the bidders in each subset, the subset associated with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the subset but known to ~~one or more~~ each of the bidders within the subset; and
 - displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: updating the lowest bids with new lowest bids from the bidders.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the assigning comprises: selecting different identifiers for each subset.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the assigning comprises: selecting different identifiers for each bidder, the different identifiers having a common characteristic with other identifiers assigned to the bidders in the subset.
5. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: setting, in each subset, bid terms.
6. (Original) The method of claim 5 wherein the setting comprises: establishing at least one of a reserve price, a historic price, a target price, time dependent variables, and bid strategies.
7. (Original) The method of claim 6 wherein the establishing comprises: providing time dependent variables including at least one of an opening time, a closing time, time extensions, and disclosures based on time.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 further comprising: providing a parameter, the parameter being at least one of regions, payment terms, delivery terms, contract length, contract volume, material, and qualification status.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the parameter comprises regions, the competition comprises global and regional competition, and the assigning comprises: allotting a range of numbers to each region; and giving a number to each bidder in the region.

10. (Original) The method of claim 9 wherein the displaying comprises: illustrating the lowest bids to allow a comparison regionally and globally.

11. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the receiving comprises: accepting bids for a plurality of lots.

12. (Currently amended) A method of bidding to drive competition in an auction comprising:
soliciting a plurality of bids; receiving the bids from a plurality of bidders; distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter;
assigning at least one identifier to the bidders in each subset, the subset associated with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the subset but known to one or more each of the bidders within the subset;
setting, in each subset, bid terms; displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder; allowing competition of the bidders within the subset and the parameter; and
updating the display with new lowest bids from the bidders.

13. (Currently amended) A system of bidding to drive competition in an auction comprising:
a database for receiving and storing bid information from bidders; and
a software for distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter, assigning at least one identifier to the bidders in each subset, the subset associated with the identifier being unknown to one or more of the bidders outside of the subset but known to one or more each of the bidders within the subset, and displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder.

14. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the parameter comprises at least one of regions, payment terms, delivery terms, contract length, contract volume, material, and qualification status.

15. (Original) The system of claim 14 wherein the subsets comprise geographical areas for the regions, methods of payment for the payment terms, methods of delivery for the delivery terms, times for the contract length, capacities for the contract volume, types of material for the material, and at least one of approval and certification for the qualification status.

16. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the identifier comprises a number selected from a range of numbers assigned to the subset.

17. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the database stores bid terms for each subset.

18. (Original) The system of claim 17 wherein the bid terms comprise at least one of a reserve price, a historic price, a target price, time dependent variables, and bid strategies.

19. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the software updates the lowest bids with new lowest bids.

20. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the identifier indicates a number of bidders in each subset.

21. (Original) The system of claim 13 wherein the identifier varies by subset and conceals a number of bidders in each subset.

22. (Currently amended) A computer program product for bidding to drive competition in an auction, the computer program product being embodied in a tangible computer readable medium and comprising computer instructions for:

receiving a plurality of bids from a plurality of bidders;

distinguishing the bidders according to a subset of a parameter and assigns at least one identifier to the bidders in each subset, the subset associated with the identifier being unknown to

one or more of the bidders outside of the subset but known to ~~one or more~~ each of the bidders within the subset; and

displaying a lowest bid with the identifier for each bidder.

23. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the parameter comprises at least one of regions, payment terms, delivery terms, contract length, contract volume, material, and qualification status.

24. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the subsets comprise geographical areas for the regions, methods of payment for the payment terms, methods of delivery for the delivery terms, times for the contract length, capacities for the contract volume, types of material for the material, and at least one of approval and certification for the qualification status.

25. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the identifier comprises a number selected from a range of numbers assigned to the subset.

26. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22, further comprising setting, in each subset, bid terms.

27. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 26 wherein the bid terms comprise at least one of a reserve price, a historic price, a target price, time dependent variables, and bid strategies.

28. (Previously presented) A computer program product of claim 22, further comprising updating the lowest bids with new lowest bids.

29. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the identifiers indicate a number of bidders in each subset.

30. (Previously presented) The computer program product of claim 22 wherein the identifier varies by subset and conceals a number of bidders in each subset.